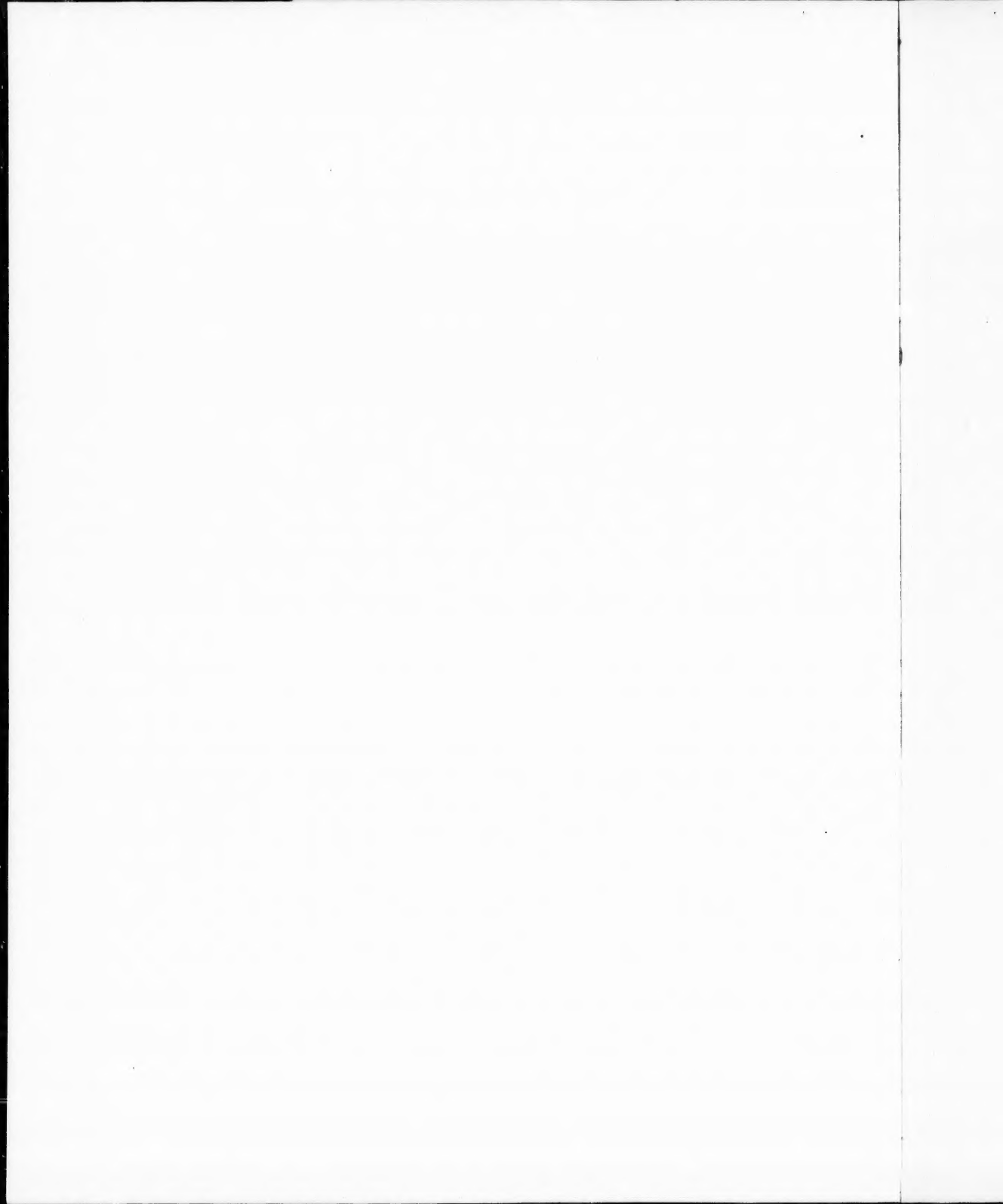




PAPERS

Referring to Red River Settlement

HUDSON'S BAY TERRITORIES.



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1. The first part of the report is a general
description of the project and its objectives.
2. The second part is a detailed description of
the methods used in the study.

3. The third part is a description of the results
of the study.

4. The fourth part is a discussion of the results
and their implications.

5. The fifth part is a conclusion.

6. The sixth part is a list of references.

7. The seventh part is an appendix.

8. The eighth part is a list of figures.

9. The ninth part is a list of tables.

10. The tenth part is a list of abbreviations.

11. The eleventh part is a list of symbols.

12. The twelfth part is a list of units.

PEMBINA.

(From Ross' Red River Settlement).

We have recorded in its proper place the arrival of several Canadian families in the colony, who were induced by the distracted state of the country to take up their abode at Pembina. Here they were joined by half-breeds, hunters, and others, with the addition of whose numbers they formed a snug little settlement; so that a Catholic church was built and houses erected. Pembina, however, was on the frontier, and as it was then doubtful where the international line would pass, those at the head of affairs thought it advisable to withdraw the people from that quarter, and place them in a more central locality, where they would be better situated both for instruction and protection. Other arguments were not wanting in favour of the selection of Red River for this purpose. The lands at Pembina were too low and wet for a permanent establishment, and at the period we have reached, there were grounds for believing that a rupture with the Sioux might occur. On the other hand, everything in the mother-colony had assumed a more favourable and more tranquil aspect. The implacable enemy of peace and order in the colony, we mean the North-West Company, was no more. The grasshoppers had disappeared from their fields; and cattle having been introduced, the hopes of the husbandman were revived, and it was expected that the colony would, in the nature of things, take root. Here, accordingly, the little settlement at Pem-

bina, after five years' occupation, found it convenient to transfer themselves. The first to suggest the change was Mr. Halkett, whose proposals were warmly seconded by the new and patriotic Governor, Captain Bulger, who succeeded Alexander M'Donell, in June 1822.

Governor Bulger was a staunch friend of peace and order, and certainly had the interest of the colony at heart. He was a just and upright man, strict and impartial. From the misrule of the times, he met with strong opposition; but being a man of judgment and decision, the colony for the first time began to exhibit the character of system and regularity under his rule. During his time the general survey of the colony was completed. He was succeeded at the end of a year only, by Mr. Robert Pelly, a cousin of Sir John Henry Pelly, Baronet, who was at that period Governor of the Hudson's Bay Company in London.

LETTER FROM GOVERNOR BULGER TO ANDREW COLVILLE ESQ.

Fort Douglas, Red River Settlement,
7th December 1822.

Sir,

I consider it to be my duty, after consulting with Messrs. Thomas, M'Donell, Cook, and Pritchard, to incur the expense of an express to London, for the purpose of apprizing the Earl of Selkirk's Executors of the circumstances which have recently occurred at the Red River, and of the present state of the Colony.

It is necessary that I should go back to the time when I last wrote to you, which was in the beginning of September, and narrate the transactions which have occurred since that time.

It was upon the 2nd September—the day on which I distributed the cows, and which had nigh proved a fatal day to me—having been knocked down by one of the wildest of those animals, the horn of which, after ripping the sleeve, pierced the collar of my coat, and left a mark in my neck, near the jugular vein.—It was upon that day, that I first became acquainted with Mr. John M'Donald, Chief Factor, from Qu' Appelle.—Having been informed that he had said, he could furnish the Colony with meat from twopence halfpenny to threepence per pound, I called upon him, on the 10th of that month, to endeavour to make an agreement for the provisions which might be required in the course of the ensuing spring, for

the Colony boats proceeding to York Factory. After some little discussion, I invited him to dine with me on the following day, it being agreed that we would then enter more fully on the subject. About an hour after I had left him, Mr. Clarke arrived, to take charge of the Company's affairs on the Red River, and I invited him, and his assistant, Mr. M'Murray, to meet Mr. M'Donald on the following day, at dinner. They came—but as I was not prepared to say exactly how much meat would be wanted, nothing was decided upon that day. But, on the 13th, I wrote to Mr. M'Donald, mentioning what quantity would be required, and offering the price which the Freemen had demanded of me,—more than which, I did not think myself justified in giving.—Mr. M'Donald's answer, of the same date, surprised me a good deal. It stated that they could not supply me with dried provisions at a less price than sixpence sterling per pound,—but they had no doubt this would be lowered by the Governor and Council, “providing all those connected with the colony had no dealings either with Freemen or Indians.”—I did not, as I have already stated, think it justifiable in me to put Lord Selkirk's family to the expense of sixpence per pound for meat, when I knew that it might be procured for less. Neither could I take upon myself to prohibit the settlers from dealing with the Freemen for provisions. But I again repeated to Mr. M'Donald, by letter, that I would give up all dealings myself, with Freemen, if he would undertake to supply me with meat at a reasonable price, and I named fourpence halfpenny per pound, being a halfpenny more than I had at first offered.

Before any answer was received to this second offer, viz. on the 14th September, the “Black Robe,” with a large party of Indians, came to Fort Douglas, and announced that “Pigowis” would arrive in the course of the day; and he accordingly appeared in the evening, attended by a numerous suite, all armed. It was easily to be seen that they had not met in the Fort by accident, and that something extraordinary was to be agitated. At this time, the settlers were all occupied in trying to save their little crops, which were in danger of being entirely destroyed by the birds. I procured, however, a dozen of the Meurons, and with them remained on the watch that night. Pigowis, with some of his chiefs, went to the

Company's Post, and did not return until the following morning, the 15th, when he intimated a desire to hold a council with me, which I, of course, immediately complied with. He spoke a great deal of what they had done for the Colony, and of what the Earl of Selkirk had promised them—complained that we had got their land too cheap, and that we even diminished their presents every year. He stated that they had been to see Mr. Clarke, who was displeased with them for visiting the Colony Fort—that he had said we were poor and miserable, so much so, that the Company had been obliged to bring up our goods from the Bay and a great deal more not worth repeating here. Having in vain searched the records of the Colony office, for some instructions from the late Earl of Selkirk, by which to regulate my transactions with these Indians, I had no alternative but to conform to what Mr. M'Donell assured me had been His Lordship's instructions to him: which were, that a present should be given to them, with their quit-rent of tobacco. I caused both to be delivered; and, upon the subject of their land, I asked Pigowis if he had not, with other chiefs, signed a paper, conveying the land to His Lordship, which the old rogue at first strenuously denied; but being more closely questioned, and informed that I could produce, not only the paper, but some of the persons who saw him sign it, he confessed he had signed it, but without consulting his chiefs and young men, who were always reproaching him with what he had done. To stop his mouth at once, I told him that among us white men, a bargain such as he had made, was considered sacred, but, if he wished to break it, he had but to say so, and I would write to His Lordship's family to take away the settlers. As I had expected, he was staggered at this, and, for some minutes, knew not what answer to give. At last, recovering himself, he requested that I would not do *that*—he should be very sorry, he said, to see the white people taken away, but he hoped I would put in writing what he had said that day, and send it to His Lordship's family.

In the height of my trouble with these Indians (and it was upon a Sunday) I was surprised by the entrance of two of the Company's clerks, who, with a strange sort of grin on their countenances, handed me a letter. On opening it, what should

it prove to be, but a notice—dated the preceding day, signed “John Clarke, Chief Factor P. H. B. C.” and addressed to me—not to trade with the Indians, on pain of being proceeded against, in what manner, whether by being cited or carried in chains before the council at York Factory, it was left to me to surmise. You will easily imagine my surprise—my indignation—upon perusing this precious production, wherein the Chief Officer of the Hudson’s Bay Company formally denounced me as a contraband trader, reduced me to a level with Mr. Nolin and other adventurers, and threatened me with, I knew not what, pains and penalties. But I will quit this ungrateful subject for the present, and return to the Indians: they continued in, and round the Fort, while I again remained up with a small guard, to watch them, during the night of this *memorable* day, and, in the morning, at my desire, they departed. Soon after, a letter from Mr. M’Donald, refusing my last offer, was brought to me, and it put an end to all hopes of an arrangement with him on the subject of provisions.

On the following day, the 17th, it was reported to me that Pigowis’ people were extremely troublesome among the Scotch families, in the lower part of the Settlement, and I was about to proceed thither with a few men, when two Indians, one of whom was Pigowis’ aide de camp, rushed in a violent manner into my room. Not approving of such freedom, I took the aide de camp by the arm, and was walking him very gently to the door, when he made a sudden spring, turned upon me, and seized hold of the collar of my coat, while, with his left hand, he tried to draw his knife. I gave him a blow between the eyes, under which he reeled almost to the other end of the passage. His companion immediately set up the war-whoop, and was advancing with his drawn knife towards me, when he also was laid sprawling on the ground, by a blow from one of our men, who, just at that moment, had accidentally entered by the other end of the passage. They were both soon disarmed, and I ordered them to be put in irons, intending to inflict upon them such a punishment as would have the effect of making others behave correctly when they visited the Colony Fort. Receiving, at this time, fresh accounts from below, of the outrageous conduct of Pigowis’ people—that they had excited a ge-

neral alarm among the settlers—that some of them were even within a few hundred yards of the Fort, and that one of them had presented his gun at a Swiss boy, and would have shot him, but for the appearance of two men : and, recollecting what James Gaddy (an old servant of the Co.) had told me the preceding day, namely, that Pigowis, on his way up had said to him, “ he was going up to frighten this new governor,” I thought it the best opportunity in the world of bringing him into something like subjection, and, having made the signal for assistance, which was answered in ten minutes by upwards of thirty of the De Meurons, I went with eighteen of them to scour the settlement, but not an Indian was to be seen ; they had all fled—even Pigowis himself, on hearing the report of my gun, flew to his canoe, and proceeded in great haste down the river. But I was not inclined to let him off so easily. I determined that he should be a witness of the punishment of his men, and, accordingly, I despatched a messenger to desire that he would come to me. Late at night, the old fellow presented himself at the gate, alone, and perfectly sober ; his agitation on entering my room was excessive ; he trembled like a leaf ; he could not utter a word, so greatly was he alarmed. I informed him how his men had misbehaved, and of my intention to punish them in his presence. I told him, that having been among Indians before, I knew well what was the duty of a chief, and that, if he could not keep his young men in proper order, and prevent them from giving trouble, and doing mischief, when they visited the settlement, he was unfit to be a chief, and I would take that coat (the grand scarlet coat) from his back, and give it to some one more able to perform the duty of chief. After this, to cheer up the old fellow’s spirits a little, I ordered a glass of rum to be given to him, and a buffalo-robe to be placed upon the floor in my room, on which I told him he might go to rest. But he slept not a wink that night. The cry of “ all’s well,” repeated by the sentinels every half hour, seemed to go to his very heart, for he invariably started up upon hearing it, and walked about the room. And, when at daylight in the *morning*, the drummer, a Swiss boy, began to beat the reveillé, so great was the old man’s terror, that I took pity on him, and desired him not to be alarmed, as we were still good friends, and I only meant to

punish his men who had misbehaved. At eight o'clock that morning, namely the 18th September, the aide de camp was brought forth, tied to a gun, and punished with twenty-five lashes, Pigowis having, previously, in a very sensible address, told the fellow that he deserved the punishment which he was then going to receive. When the other Indian was brought out, upon Pigowis saying he was a very quiet young man, and that he would be sorry to see him punished for the first offence, I forgave him, which pleased Pigowis amazingly. In a second address, he thanked me, and exhorted the pardoned man to do the same, and to avoid doing anything in future which might make him, (Pigowis) repent having interceded for him. His Highness departed after breakfast, seemingly well satisfied, but, on his passage down the river, he complained to his friend, James Gaddy, that "I was the very devil." Reports were in circulation on the following day, that he had said he would prevent our boats from coming up the river, upon which I sent him word that if he, or any of his people, attempted to stop our boats, or molest in any way the persons belonging to the Colony, they could not escape me: I would pursue them to the extremity of the lake, and punish them in the most severe manner. He came up immediately to vindicate his character, and assured me he never had said he would stop our boats, and never thought of doing such a thing, and, in fact, our boats have since passed and repassed without the smallest insult.

The evening of the day on which the Indian received his punishment, namely, the 18th of September, the plains above Hayfield Farm were observed to be on fire, and, before eleven o'clock that night, the farm was in flames. Fortunately, all our hay, and nearly all our grain, had been got in, and stacked; but, to save what remained on the field, all hands were employed in beating down the fire, all that night, and next day, and part of the second night: and, in the end, we saved everything except the fences. But dreadful was the loss in other quarters. All the hay which the settlers had cut for their cows in every direction on the east side of the Red River, was consumed.

On the 20th another dreadful fire had nearly destroyed the houses on the west

side, and, on the 21st, a report from Pambina of the approach of the Scioux in a large body, alarmed me for the safety of the Settlement itself.

On the 25th September, Mr. Forest arrived in one of the Colony boats from Pambina with meat. In the beginning of August, to insure a supply of provisions in time to be sent to meet the fall boats, I made an agreement with Mr. Forest for a certain quantity of grease and pemican, to be delivered by him at Fort Douglas, on, or before, the 25th September, and I gave him the loan of a boat to enable him to fulfil his agreement. He had only been able to procure a part of what he had promised, which I sent off, on the 26th, in a boat to Norway House, while Mr. Forest prepared to return to Pambina in the boat I had lent him, to endeavour to procure the remainder of the meat which he had contracted for. On the 26th, Mr. John M'Donald departed for his station at Qu' Appelle: to the very last, though we had disagreed about the price of provisions, I found HIM friendly, moderate, and conciliating. On the 27th, an armed party of the Company's servants, headed by Messrs. Clarke and M'Murray, broke open the house of a settler, named Larante, (who was then in the plains, procuring meat, which he had promised to me, in part payment of his debt to Lord Selkirk's estate) and carried away some few furs and dressed moose-skins found in the house. I confess, I was appalled when I heard of this proceeding; but I had little or no time to reflect upon the situation to which it would reduce me, when a body of the settlers came to the Fort—complained of what the Company's people had done—and appealed to me. "Are you not," they said, "our Governor, and will you suffer our houses to be broken open without your authority, and our wives ill-used as this poor lone woman has been?" What could I say? What answer could I give, but that which truth dictated—namely, that I was not invested with any power to interfere with the officers of the Hudson's Bay Company? I will not repeat the violent language which proceeded from these men, upon this acknowledgment of my limited authority, but it was evident that there was an end of my influence, and, consequently, my means of doing good in the settlement. This unfortunate day had well nigh also witnessed the destruction of Fort Douglas: the fire having crossed

the Ossiniboyne about three miles above the Company's Post, was observed about sun-set, making rapid progress towards our Fort. All the men I could collect, proceeded to the plains, and met the fire at about eight hundred yards from the Fort, where they worked amidst smoke and flame, until, favoured by a slight change of the wind, they turned the fire in a direction downwards, in the rear of the Scotch farms. We had hardly effected this, when another awful fire was seen approaching Fort Douglas, from the Company's Post, (asserted, falsely, I am sure, to have been kindled by their people). All attempts to stop it were in vain, until it reached the creek, just above our Fort; there we first began to get it under, and a few drops of rain falling towards the morning, greatly assisted us in extinguishing it.

It had recently been made public that the Company had raised the price of dried meat to tenpence per pound, being double what others demanded. On the morning of the 30th September, I received notice to be on my guard, that it was Mr. Clarke's intention to stop the boat I had lent to Mr. Forest, and to seize the goods which he was taking to Pambina, to purchase the meat required to complete his agreement with me. This I thought was going rather too far. To the overthrow of my authority in the Colony, I had submitted—because I was not sure that the Hudson's Bay Company, or Lord Selkirk's Executors, would give me any countenance or support if I had employed force to maintain that authority against their Chief Factor—but I had not relinquished my right to ward off any blow, or resist any aggression, which he might direct against myself or the Colony servants. I sent him a copy of my commission from the Hudson's Bay Company, and desired to know whether he would, or not, acknowledge the authority given to me by that commission. Receiving no reply to this demand, and hearing, towards the evening, that he had sentries planted on the bank of the river, I felt convinced that he really meant to stop the boat, and I resolved to frustrate his design, if I possibly could. With this view I embarked, with the surgeon, and three of the Colony servants, armed, and ordered the boat to proceed on her voyage. When opposite to the Company's Post, we were twice hailed, and desired to come on

shore, and an order to the same effect was borne to us by one of the Company's clerks, in a small canoe.

Expecting that the next step would be to send an armed boat after us, and desiring most sincerely to avoid a hostile meeting between the Company's servants and those of the Colony, I caused three guns to be fired in the air, hoping that the former would be thereby led to think that I was in the boat, and, of course, prepared to defend it. The gentlemen in Fort Douglas, hearing the report of these guns, became apprehensive for my safety, and caused the alarm-signal to be fired, which, in less than fifteen minutes, brought upwards of fifty of the settlers, armed, to the Fort, about twenty of whom embarked in one of the large boats, and rowed up the river to my assistance. Happily, I stood in need of none. The report of the guns fired from my boat, followed, or to use Mr. Clarke's own words "answered by a great gun from the Colony House," had the wished-for effect, of keeping the Company's servants within their Fort. Late that night, I received, at Hayfield Farm, (having landed there, while the boat proceeded on her voyage to Pambina) a letter from Mr. Clarke. It was not to be expected, that he would condescend to acknowledge that he had been frustrated in his design. It was too mortifying a confession for him to make: he, therefore, affected an air of surprise, and wrote to me for an explanation of the cause of the firing, forgetting to guard against the simplicity of his clerk, who, very earnestly assured me, that "they would never have attempted to stop the boat, if they had known that I was in it." Certainly, if I had not been in it, it would have been taken, and it would then have cost, perhaps some lives, to retake it. After a night of intense anxiety, I returned on the morning of the 1st October, to Fort Douglas, benumbed with cold—faint for want of rest and nourishment, and most heartily disgusted with my situation. I saw that I must either submit to whatever Mr. Clarke, in his sovereign pleasure, might choose to do, or dictate; or openly resist him. To bow to him was out of the question;—to oppose him would occasion tumult, and perhaps, bloodshed in the Colony, and bring upon me the displeasure of those whom I wished to please. Nothing, therefore, remained for me but to quit the country, and I resolved to do

so, and to seek an asylum with Dr. M'Laughlin at Lac La Pluie until the opening of the communication would enable me to procure a conveyance to Canada.

On the following day, the 2nd October, I was surprised by the arrival of some of the Colony boats, from York Factory, with Mr. Kemp, Mr. Henderson, Mr. Mitchell, the blacksmith, and others from England. Mr. Kemp brought a letter from Mr. Halkett for Mr. Clarke, but not a line for me. In the course of the day, Mr. Clarke sent me a copy of Mr. Halkett's letter, from which, it appeared, that the commission from the King, nominating magistrates for the Settlement, had not been sent out, and that Mr. Clarke was looked to, as the person whose firm, temperate, and decisive measures, would bring about a reform among the settlers. It was perhaps vanity, and a desire to mortify me, that induced Mr. Clarke to favour me with a sight of this letter, but, if I had before entertained any doubt, the perusal of it fully satisfied me that I had done right in not attempting to enforce my authority against him; for I could have had no chance of being supported or backed, against a person so highly esteemed, and confided in, by Mr. Halkett. On the 4th October, I addressed a letter to Mr. Clarke, containing a full and formal statement of my complaints against him, a copy whereof is enclosed. On the 6th, about twenty of the Meurons came to Fort Douglas, and stated that they had just heard a proclamation (read by the Bishop in the chapel) that the Hudson's Bay Company possessed the right of preventing the settlers from buying provisions, but that Mr. Clarke desisted, for the present, from enforcing that right. As usual, these men were most intemperate in their language—they said they saw that it was intended to make slaves of them, but—I will not repeat any more of what they said. Being that day exceedingly unwell, I sent a person to the Bishop to collect the truth of the story I had just heard, when he immediately sent me a copy (in his own hand-writing) of the letter he had received from Mr. Clarke on the subject, which copy is also enclosed. On the evening of the 10th, receiving no answer from Mr. Clarke to my letter of the 4th, and, being somewhat surprised at the non-arrival of the rest of our people from York, I mounted a guard in the largest boat I had, and proceeded down the river, to see if they had met with any

obstruction from the "Colony Chief;" but they had not: I met them on the next day about fourteen miles above Netley Creek. Having received from Mr. West, all the letters and papers, which had been entrusted to his care by Mr. Halkett, I landed, and made my way on foot that night to Fort Douglas; where I arrived at seven o'clock the next morning, the 12th. In the course of that day, a letter was brought to me from Mr. Clarke. It purported to be a reply to mine of the 4th, but it really was no answer at all. The circumstances stated in my letter were notorious in the Settlement: he did not think it prudent to admit them, in writing, and, therefore, as he must say something, he thought it best, after seven or eight days' consideration, to call them "fabulous" charges. I herewith send his letter. As to the co-operation, which he therein offered: it amounted to this—acknowledge me to be your superior—let me dictate to you, and I will assist you in dictating to others—such co-operation was not at all to my mind. Upon opening the packet from England, I found it to contain:

Your letter of 31st May.

Power of Attorney to grant lands.

Engagements with Mr. Kemp, the mill-wright, and blacksmith.

Statements of balances to 31st May 1821.

Forms of Day Book and Ledger.

Printed Forms of affidavits for pensioners.

Invoice of goods shipped 31st May last, but that shewing the prime cost, was detained at York Factory.

Sundry documents from Mr. Roberts respecting errors in Colony accounts. The tin case, containing Registry Books, and with a medal and flag for Pigowis, were likewise received.

I had the honour of receiving, at the same time, a letter dated 1st June, from the Hon. Committee of the Hudson's Bay Company, enclosing a copy of certain resolutions, entered into at a General Court held on the 29th May. I received these resolutions with all due deference and respect, but it was quite out of my power to act upon them. Permit me to remind you, that I did not expect, when

I left England, to be called upon, at any time, to perform any judicial functions, for which I am not competent in point of ability, nor qualified by law. The management of the Settlement for *one year*, was all that I had agreed to undertake ; and it was, as I understood, to give me more authority, in the eyes of the settlers, than I could possibly have, if merely the agent of the Executors, that a commission, as Governor of Assiniboia was granted to me. No provision appears to have been made to secure to me the respect and obedience of the Company's officers and servants in this District ; what was the consequence ? They treated me as if I had no authority at all, and taught the settlers to do the same, and to consider me as having been sent here merely to give them goods, and attend to their wants : to be, in short, their slave. Before the resolution of the 29th May arrived, the mischief was done ; even my title had, by that time, been changed to " Monsieur le Capitaine," while that of " Monsieur le Gouverneur," had been transferred to Mr. Clarke. But, even if the case had been otherwise, and if I had felt myself fully qualified, I could not possibly think of acting, while there existed in the heart of the settlers a power independent of the Governor and Council. The possessor of that power might not be a just, a noble-minded man : he might laugh to scorn our decisions, and invade our personal rights :—he might insult our feelings, by taking the settlers' daughters, and keeping a perfect brothel under our very eyes. I could not bear these things.

I consented, at the request of Mr. West, Mr. M'Donald, and Mr. Logan, to postpone my departure until next spring, but I remained merely as the steward of Lord Selkirk's executors.

In that capacity, I must now inform you, that there were six boats (including that sent by Mrs. Matthey for her husband) sent from the Colony, after my arrival, to York Factory, and directions were sent to Mr. Angus Macdonald as to the manner in which they were to be disposed of. The engaged servants of the Colony expected from England, and the baggage of the Swiss settlers, were to be the first sent up ; and then, such goods as Mr. Angus Macdonald might think most requisite ; some articles being particularly specified in my letter to him. It would

appear, however, from his own account, that Mr. Simpson took from him the key of the Colony store, and loaded the boats with what he pleased. It is very certain that they were more than half laden with private property, and servants of the Company, and their families and baggage, while a large proportion of the baggage of the unfortunate Swiss families, was, contrary to Mr. Halkett's express promise to them, left behind. Mr. Halkett, in a letter to me from York Factory, complained that there was an immense quantity of goods rotting in the Colony store at that place, but, when boats are sent down, with clear directions, to bring up a part of this property, if those directions are disregarded, and the boats otherwise loaded, who, I should like to know, is to be responsible? Window-glass was much wanted here; and Mr. Halkett had said he would cause some to be sent up, but all that came was *one box*, which Mr. Halkett had given at York Factory to the schoolmistress. Sheet iron was a thing I had particularly requested, that I might be enabled to put up stoves, and diminish the consumption of wood, and Mr. Halkett wrote to me that some should be sent up. It, however, never came, and dreadful will be the expense of fuel, in consequence, this winter. I had requested that a double block might be sent up, but it came not. I had expected that a small supply of port-wine, and other liquor, for my own use, in case of sickness, would be sent to me from York Factory, but in this I was also dissatisfied. A little sour, muddy Teneriffe, was thought good enough for me. Blankets, and duffle for socks, were two articles well known to be absolutely necessary in this Siberian climate, but, not a yard of the latter, and only three pair of the former were sent up. I had begged of Mr. Halkett to apply to Mr. Simpson, for an order to the Chief Factor here, to issue to me the Company's notes, upon my applying for them, and giving a bill on you for the amount, but Mr. Halkett, it would appear, had not sufficient influence with the Governor, to accomplish this most important object. I may also state here, that a complaint was made to me that Mr. S. had compelled the mill-wright and blacksmith, to work their passage in the boats from York Factory, contrary to the terms of their agreement with you. A similar complaint was made to me by Heden, the blacksmith, and his man, who have not

merely refused to pay anything for their passage from York, but have demanded payment for working the boats up. It must pain you to hear these things, but I am forced to mention them. I shall not trouble you with an account of the horrible life which I led, after the arrival of the boat; not for the half of your private fortune, would I submit to so much again. It made me so ill, I was obliged to take to my bed, from which I was compelled to rise, by a report (brought from Pambina by the Company's people) that the Scioux was there, on their way to the Forts. Though hardly able to stand, I got up, and kept the men employed day and night, putting the block-houses in something like a defensible state, and making arrangements for securing the women and children within the Fort: my intentions being, to meet the Scioux on the plains, with my two guns, and a strong force, and, dressed as they had seen me, when in the service of the King, and there to ask them what they wanted. Before my preparations were quite finished, two guns were, about eleven o'clock at night, fired close to the pickets of our Fort, at, as I imagined, the man on sentry. Thinking the Scioux had arrived, I waited anxiously for daylight, that I might see my way clearly. So soon as the day appeared, the gates were opened, and the first thing that presented itself, was a pole stuck in the ground, to which was attached a bit of blue cloth, containing some human hair, tobacco, gunpowder, and earth. The signification of this was understood, though it was evident it had not been done by Indians, and, in the course of the day, I heard what left no doubt on my mind, that the whole had been a trick of the Company's people, to give me more trouble; which, Heaven knows, was unnecessary. The next day, I was compelled to take my bed again, and was confined to it for seventeen days, in a room where my bed-curtains were kept in constant agitation by the wind.

During that time, a report was brought to me by Mr. Reynberger, who has proved a zealous and faithful assistant to me, in all my troubles with his countrymen, that some of the best of the Swiss settlers were preparing to leave the Red River in the spring, that the Meurons were also talking of leaving it in a body—of plundering the Company's stores, and going to the United States, and that he had heard,

a number of the Canadians, and a few of the Scotch, intended going with them. I immediately sent him for Witchy, of whom I had formed a good opinion, as he gave me no trouble, and appeared to be a very quiet, sober, hard-working man, and was always the first at the Fort upon an alarm. He came, and, in reply to my enquiries, frankly avowed that it was their intention to go away in a body, in the spring, to the Mississippi. They dreaded being abandoned by the family of my would Lord, and left to the mercy of the Company's officers in this country, who prevent them from buying meat and skins to clothe themselves—who would allow them perhaps two shillings a bushel for their grain, and make them pay forty or fifty for a gallon of rum, and thirty for a yard of cloth. For his own part, Witchy said, he wished not to leave the country with a bad reputation—he wished to go home to his own country, where he had still a little property. Seeing that Witchy's mind was made up, and, being apprehensive that, if they departed in the way they proposed, they might be induced, after doing all the mischief in their power here, to join the American Fur Company at Lac Travers, and be the cause of serious injury both to the Colony and the Hudson's Bay Company, I put the question to Witchy: "If the Meurons are provided with a passage to their own country, will they be satisfied?" The answer was, he was sure they would, and, if they could be certain of getting home next year by the Company's ships, they would not think of going to the Mississippi. Upon his saying that they meant to have a meeting on the following Sunday (the 24th), to fix the time of their departure, I desired he would make known what I had said, and that, if they resolved not to remain in the Red River, I recommended to them to make a petition to Lord Selkirk's executors for a passage home, and I would forward it immediately to England. In answer, Witchy said, he feared they would not get an answer in time to go home next year, but he assured me he would mention what I had said, and that, whatever might be resolved upon, he would conceal nothing from me. On Sunday evening, he called on me, and stated that they were all determined to go—some home—others to the United States—that they would send me a petition to be forwarded to England, and would wait until July next for an answer. On the next day, they

applied to me to allow Mr. Reynberger to translate into French the paper they had made out, and I acceded to their request. On the 28th, their petition was sent to me, couched in rather curious, but respectful language, and signed by thirty persons, half of whom wrote their names; the remainder made their marks. Two days after, some of those very men, who had signed their names to this petition, and who, in general, take the lead of the others, requested that I would not send the petition to England, as they had changed their minds. Mr. Clarke, they said, had told them that there would be a corps of cavalry raised here next summer, in which he would employ them, and that they would be well paid—and that the Colony store would always be open to them. This, with some other nonsense, which they repeated, as having been told them by Mr. Clarke, and perhaps a glass or two of rum, for they were all in liquor, had determined them to remain in Red River. Perhaps it may not be so easy for Mr. Clarke's successor, or mine, to satisfy them, should the letter of service for raising the cavalry not arrive. But, I am not answerable for what Mr. Clarke may say or do. I returned them their petition, and desired they would never attempt to impose upon me again, or to trouble me with their complaints. Witchy, alone, continues firm in his determination to return to his own country, and he has requested that I would solicit a passage for himself and family, *via* the Bay, next summer. As for the others of the De Meurons, it is quite absurd to suppose they will ever prove peaceable and industrious settlers:—the only charm that Red River possesses, in their eyes, and, I may say, in the eyes of almost all the settlers, is the Colony stores. Their demands are insatiable,—and, when refused, their insolence extreme. United, as they are, among themselves, and ferocious in their dispositions, nothing can be done against them; they never intend—they never will be able—to pay for what they get—and, mark my words, the closing of Lord Selkirk's stores here, will be the signal for them to depart. With respect to the Canadian settlers, they are, mostly, old, worn-out men, with large and idle families; they are finished *knaves*, and will remain here, so long as they can get what they want from the store: for which, it is morally impossible that they can ever pay. As for the Swiss settlers, their

hatred of Red River is insuperable; what little confidence they had in us, has been destroyed by the arrival of the boats without their baggage. Although news had been received here, that a party of them, which left this in the spring, for the Prairie du Chien, had suffered the most dreadful hardships, and had been compelled to eat one of their companions; and, in defiance of the danger to be encountered in passing through the Scioux country, nine more, (the best and most useful among them) left this, in the month of September last, for the Prairie du Chien; of whose fate we are still uncertain. Four others, (young men) proceeded to Montreal, in the canoe that brought up M. Provencher. One young man who had his feet frozen last winter in the plains, is now a burthen upon us; and next spring, it is but too certain, that all that are able—all that are worth anything—will take their departure for the Mississippi, leaving upon our hands, seven or eight old, helpless men, with large and young families, whom we must either send back to their own country, or maintain; as they are incapable of any exertion whatsoever. But I must now leave off, for the cold is so intense, that I cannot any longer hold my pen.

9th December, 1822—It is a dreadful tale which I have related to you, but it is a true one. It was only this morning that some of the Swiss women came to me, begging, with tears in their eyes, some clothing. They admitted that their husbands intended going away—they could never be happy in the Red River. I refused to give them anything. "*In the name of God, what are we to do?*" they said. "You have left our little property at the sea—and will you now let us perish?" I could not stand this reproach, and I ordered some things to be given to them.

It has not, I am sorry to say, been in my power, to place Mr. Kemp in a house of his own. It was the wish of Mr Halkett that, until Mr. West could get the Company's old Fort, he should be permitted to occupy Hayfield Farm-house. Mr. Clarke, it seems, could not spare the Fort, and Mr. West was, in consequence, obliged to take possession of his old habitation at the farm, where he still remains. What a pity it is, what a misfortune, I may say, that the good intentions of the

gentlemen at home, should, in so many ways, be counteracted by *their* people in this country. But upon this, and other matters, you will receive every information from Mr. West himself, next autumn. I have been obliged to keep Mr. Kemp and his man in the Fort, but I will put him in possession of the Farm, the moment Mr. West can, without inconvenience, remove from it. Mr. Kemp is a very steady man; he has been very industrious in his professional avocation, and has actually done a great deal since he arrived. He assures me, that he will have a correct plan of the settlement prepared for me to take home next spring. Like myself, he appears to have made a bad bargain; his year's salary will not pay and feed more than one of his chain-carriers, it being impossible to get a man here to do anything under three shillings a day, and his living; and, knowing this to be the case, and, seeing how zealously Mr. Kemp has commenced his duties, I really think a larger salary should be allowed him. Mr. Henderson, also, I consider an acquisition, from his steady, correct deportment, and his knowledge of accounts. Against the old hands, I mean Mr. Allez, and Mr. Angus Macdonald, I have no cause of complaint. They are attentive as I could wish, but they really do not understand accounts. They will return to England by the ships next summer, and, to prevent their being disappointed, it would be proper for you to send an order to York Factory, for their being provided with a passage home. Mr. Reynberger also solicits that he may be allowed a passage home next summer, by the Company's ships, it being his intention to return to Poland.

I have engaged Mr. Henderson, at the rate of one hundred pounds per annum, and his board and lodging, to keep the accounts and registers, until the arrival of my successor, who will be at liberty to re-engage Mr. Henderson, or not, as he may think proper; but in case he should not, Mr. Henderson is to be provided with a free passage to England *via* Hudson's Bay. Mr. Fletcher, the store-keeper, has behaved very well, since my arrival: his time will expire in May, but I shall keep him until the new Governor arrives, who can re-engage him if he thinks proper. Mr. Mitchell, the millwright, is, I think, a most valuable man. I was very sorry that I had no comfortable place to put him in, but I have done my

best, and he is now *far better housed than I am*. Part of the saw-mill has been brought from York, and the remainder shall be brought in the spring. The corn-mill, it is agreed on all hands, cannot be brought up; and, it must, therefore, be re-shipped for England next summer. Mr. Mitchell proposes making a wind corn-mill, upon the model found here, only a small part of the machinery being, he says, required from England, and a memorandum of which I enclose, that you may order the same to be shipped in May next. At present, we have a hand-mill, which grinds from twelve to fifteen bushels per day, but Mr. Mitchell intends improving upon it, and it will then, he thinks, answer until the windmill is erected.

I have not parted with any of the oxen, though I have been teased out of my life for them by the settlers. It is impossible, at present, to state exactly the quantity of grain raised last summer on Hayfield Farm, as but a very small quantity of it has yet been thrashed. It may be from five to six hundred bushels. We have received from the Scotch settlers, about six hundred bushels of wheat and barley, which I really do not know what to do with. I thought it had been settled that the Company would take our surplus produce, but I find they will not. This is a matter which requires your serious consideration.

I herewith transmit some queries which were proposed to me, on the part of the Roman Catholic Bishop of this place, with my answers to the same. It is necessary that you should give precise instructions to the gentleman, whom you may send out in the spring, as to how the Pambina people are to be dealt with, (see the Bishop's 5th query, the meaning of which is this—shall those people, the lazy unsettled, roguish Canadians and half-breeds of Pambina, get upon credit what they want from the Colony store—in other words, will they be supported at the expense of Lord Selkirk's family?) Mr. Provencher has assured me (and you will be pleased to inform Mr Halkett) that the chapel shall be removed in the spring, from Pambina to this place. What the R. C. Mission are to do with their land, I know not: they have no funds, and it is a certain fact, that, at this very moment, the Bishop himself is in the greatest distress. Would it were in my power to relieve him, but it is not.

The excessive coldness of my room has suggested to me that it would be a good thing if you were to send out a quantity of cheap room-paper. Last night, my room was completely filled with snow; in one place there were upwards of eight inches. You will judge from this what a comfortable, what a happy life, mine must be.

14th December 1822.

Illness has prevented my closing my letter until this day, and now all that I am capable of doing is to recommend to you :—

1st.—To get courts and magistrates nominated by the King.

2nd.—To get a company of troops sent out to support the magistrates, and keep the natives in order.

3rd.—To circulate money.

4th.—To find a market for our surplus grain.

5th.—And let it be determined whether the Council at York Factory are justified in preventing the settlers from buying moose, or deer-skins, for clothing and provisions.

If these things cannot be done, it is my sincere (it may be my last) advice to you, to spend no more of Lord Selkirk's money upon Red River.

Believe me to be, with great respect,

Sir,

Your most obedient servant

(Signed) A. Bulger.

